

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 5, 7-9, and 11-41 are presently active in this case, Claims 17-39 being previously withdrawn from consideration; Claims 1, 5, 7-9, 11, 40 and 41 amended and Claims 2-4, 6, 10, 12, and 15-16 canceled by way of the present amendment.

In the outstanding Official Action, Claims 4 and 10 were objected to for being dependent upon a rejected base claim but were indicated as allowable if rewritten independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims; Claims 1-3, 7-9, 13-14 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being unpatentable by U.S. patent number 5,180,685 to Yamamoto et al.; and Claims 5-6, 11-2, 15, 40-41 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Yamamoto et al. in view of U.S. patent number 5,352,919 to Takano.

Applicants wish to thank Examiner Schillinger for the indication of allowable subject matter in Claims 4 and 10. Applicants have now amended Claim 1 to include the allowable subject matter of Claim 4 and intervening Claims 2 and 3. In addition, Applicants have amended Claim 9 to include the allowable subject matter of Claim 10 as well as Claim 1 and the intervening Claim 2. Therefore, Applicants' Claims 1 and 9 are now in condition for allowance. Further, the remaining active claims in this case have been amended to depend from either Claim 1 or 9. Therefore, Applicants' dependent Claims 5, 7-8, 11 and 13-14 are also in condition for allowance.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment, no further issues are believed to be outstanding in the present application and the present application is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. An early and favorable action is therefore respectfully requested.

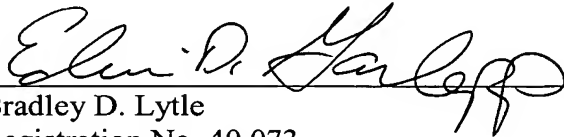
Respectfully submitted,

Customer Number

22850

Tel: (703) 413-3000
Fax: (703) 413 -2220
(OSMMN 08/03)

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.


Bradley D. Lytle
Registration No. 40,073

Edwin D. Garlepp
Registration No. 45,330

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